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WEEVIL FIGHT GAVE IMPETUS TO FARM WORK

Demonstration Idea Put Into Practice at Terrell in 1903; Dr. S. A. Knapp in Charge.

The Mexican cotton boll weevil invaded Texas shortly after 1900 and threw the entire state into a panic for this was the first real serious cotton pest known. Among the business men alert for some means of combating the destructive weevil were those of Terrell, Texas. One of their number, E. H. R. Green, son of the famous millionaires, Hetty Green, on a trip to New York City met Dr. Seaman A. Knapp. Mr. Green was so impressed with the personality of the man and with his idea of the farm demonstration as a means of helping farmers better themselves that he returned to Terrell to tell his fellow townsmen that he believed Dr. Knapp had the key to the whole agricultural situation. Accordingly the citizens invited Dr. Knapp to address a large gathering of town and country people. So enthused were they with his suggestions for combating the boll weevil by cultural methods introduced by farm demonstrations that they offered to raise a fund of $1500 to guarantee some local farmer against loss in conducting such a demonstration if Dr. Knapp would supervise the work.

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Demonstration at Terrell.

The offer was accepted, the money was raised, and in 1903 Walter C. Porter ran a 100-acre demonstration of cotton, corn and oats and cow peas in rotation. Every two weeks Dr. Knapp visited the demonstration and a citizens' committee likewise closely inspected the progress of the work. Mr. Porter said that he made $100 more from this tract than was made by average methods on similar land thereabouts. This, the first farm demonstration as such, created a great stir locally and throughout East Texas.

James Wilson, secretary of agriculture and close personal friend of Dr. Knapp (from Iowa days), and for whom Dr. Knapp had done considerable investigational work in the Orient with rice while directing the operations of a large colonization project in Southwestern Louisiana, had kept his eye on this first demonstration. In fact the secretary visited Porter's demonstration in person on November 4, 1902. It appealed to him as a good common sense method. Accordingly he diverted $40,000 of a $210,000 congressional appropriation for fighting the boll weevil to the establishment of more of these farm demonstrations in East Texas and Louisiana.

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Boll Weevil Fight.

Dr. Knapp was put in charge of this new work, placed under the bureau of plant industry, Dr. B. T. Galloway, chief), and in January, 1904, made Houston his headquarters. Early in February he appointed the first "special agents" whose job it became to establish and conduct farm demonstrations looking to the control or elimination of the ravages of the boll weevil by good seed, early plowing, and continued cultivation methods. Those agents, employed for short periods which were later lengthened, were paid about $60 a month, and were given passes by the railroads. Each agent worked a given territory up and down some of the main railroads of East Texas and Louisiana.

The first such agents put to work by Dr. Knapp were J. A. Evans, now assistant chief, office of co-operative extension work, U. S. department of agriculture; W. F. Proctor, who died in 1916 while state agent in the Texas Extension Service; W. D. Bentley, now assistant director of extension in Oklahoma; and J. L. Quicksall, later district and state agent in Texas and now a retired farmer at Waco, Texas. Many special agents were appointed in February and during 1904 a total of 38 were put to work.

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Other States Follow.

The early demonstrations succeeded. Their success spread far and wide. Texas soon had more than 50 special agents and other Southern states, aided by the department and after 1906 by the general education board of New York City, began farm demonstrations. In 1906 the county unit was adopted as the unit of the work and W. C. Stallings was appointed farm demonstration agent for Smith County, Texas, thus becoming the first county agent in the United States. This was five years earlier than county agent work was started in the North, in Broome County, New York. It is true that various forms of agricultural extension work started in Texas, to the idea of the county unit and the demonstration method are the product of Doctor Knapp and of Texas.

The story of the expansion of farm demonstration work reads like a romance. Tom M. Marks in 1904 organized the first boys' corn club under county agent supervision in Jack County, Texas, the big idea being to produce yields with large profits. Cotton clubs followed the next year, girls' tomato canning clubs in 1910, boys' pig clubs in 1911 and home demonstration work in 1912. By this time there were 851 agents in the South working with 102,566 adult farmers, 54,350 boys and 28,309 girls.

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Farmers Institutes.

Texas A. and M. College engaged in a form of agricultural extension work prior to the Smith-Lever act of 1914. In 1892 an agricultural journal published in Dallas (presumably Farm & Ranch) took an active part in holding a series of farmers' institutes in co-operation with the railroads and some of the staff of the college and experiment station. The work was abandoned because of failure of the legislature to render aid. The farmers' congress of Texas appealed to the public in 1897 for aid in conducting farmers' institutes but no definite results were obtained. Again in 1902 the same above referred to agricultural journal organized some institute work and provided the expense for a state organizer. Institutes held through the fall and winter created such favorable comment that the legislature in 1903 made a small appropriation for two years with a member of the A. and M. faculty as director. The legislature failed to keep up their appropriations but the college continued the director's expenses and institutes were continued with the help of the railroads, individuals and agricultural press of the state. The federal government helped some in the early campaign for diversification following the boll weevil infestation. County institute organizations developed and met twice monthly to discuss agricultural questions and once a year met at the college for "round-up institutes."

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Extension Department.

But there was little organized extension work on the part of the college until 1910 when the board of directors provided for an extension department which confined its activities principally to correspondence courses, short courses at the college, demonstration trains, a few movable schools, and to helping in the organization of boys' and girls' clubs over the state.

At a meeting of the board of directors in 1912 a regular extension service was created at the college with the work in charge of a committee of the deans of the schools of agriculture and engineering, the state chemist and the director of the experiment station. In March of that year a memorandum of understanding was signed by the president of the college and the chief of the bureau of plant industry for co-operation in farm demonstration and club work. Three co-operative agents were appointed, part of whose salaries was paid by the department and part by the college. Later that year (October 1, 1912), another memorandum was signed making all extension work of the college and department co-operative and the state agent and other supervisory members of the farm demonstration work faculty members. The state agent's (W. F. Proctor) headquarters were moved to the college. The work thereafter continued in force until the Smith-Lever act of 1913 became operative, July 1, 1914. This act was approved by the governor June 27, 1914, and by the legislature of Texas January 23, 1915.

It is hard to over-emphasize the fact that it was the demonstration idea that gave this work such overwhelming success in its earlier years, and is the basis of most extension work today—certainly in Texas and the South. The demonstration as a means of showing people better ways is revolutionary in educational circles. It is the exact opposite of classroom teaching, which instructs by precept. Demonstration work revolts from advice and lectures and goes in for putting theories to work and letting the results speak for themselves. "A demonstration is a progressive, practical example of better farming or home-making by a farmer or member of his family, which leads to greater profit, comfort, culture, influence and power." People learn by doing.

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Progress Made.

The first great milestone in agricultural extension was reached in 1914, when the United States government formally took over the job of playing big brother to the states by aiding every one of the states to establish or continue extension work in agriculture and home economics with the help of the United States department of agriculture. At the time the act went into effect there were 781 county farm demonstration agents at work and 251 county home demonstration agents. There are now nearly 1000 of these women agents carrying on object lessons in household economics and comforts for the benefit of the farm wife and her daughters. Such phases of demonstration work as canning, gardening, poultry raising, proper food preparation, clothing the family and beautifying the home are undertaken by home demonstration agents.

How well the job has been done of helping the farmer and his family to help themselves is the discoverer of science and the experience of other successful men and women may be judged by the fact that there were 2,435 county agents and 154 home demonstration agents in the United States in 1927. Besides this, there were 1,014 negro county agents, 119 negro home demonstration agents and three negro club agents. More than a million farmers and members of their families are in demonstrations every year. The universal acceptance of extension work is a sufficient proof of its worth.

Tom M. Marks, upper left hand corner, was Jack County farm demonstration agent in 1907 who remarked: "You can't teach old dogs new tricks, so I'll try the pups." This was full newspaper carried columns of praise for the showing made by the Jack County Boys' Corn Club in the first club of that kind in the country. I. J. Thornton, upper right, is president of the Texas Club Boys Congress. The boys with the ears hooked to the plow are sons of J. T. Armstrong, Hood County, who worked their corn club acres that year (1910) with the colt and made 35 bushels of corn to the acre. Mrs. Edna W. Trigg is home demonstration agent in Denton County and holds the long-service record in Texas, having been in the service for 16 consecutive years. At the right of her picture is a group of workers assigned to West Texas points. Circle inset shows Dr. Seaman A. Knapp, "father of farm extension work," and lower right, W. C. Stallings, former demonstration agent in Smith County and the first county agent in the United States. Between the portraits are views of the present administration building for Texas A. and M. College and the tents first housed the service.

TRIBUTE TO BE PAID FOUNDER OF FARM PLAN

Incidents in Life of Doctor Knapp to Be Recalled on Program of Extension Service Anniversary.

BY ETHEL OSBORN HILL

Uncle Sam pays tribute to the fact that Texas was the pioneer state in sponsoring practical farm and home demonstration work in selecting Houston as the place for the silver anniversary of agricultural extension service. The celebration will last three days, beginning Tuesday.

Special honor will be paid to the memory of Dr. Seaman A. Knapp, founder and originator of the plan to bring scientific farm knowledge in practical form to the farmers themselves. His work has been described as "the greatest educational contribution of this or any age."

Long before the real development of this work was begun in Texas, Doctor Knapp was paving the way for the movement that is now nationwide, by his outstanding, fantastic personal service to the farmers of Iowa, where, first as dean of agriculture and later as president, of the Iowa Agricultural College, he did more than any other one man to stress the importance of the agricultural and domestic sciences arts. He has been characterized as "one of the few great agricultural statesmen that America has produced."

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Farm Club.

Beginning with adults, the work in a few years included boys' and girls agricultural clubs and finally developed into that organization now known as the 4-H Clubs, with a membership of 600,000 and it is estimated that within the next few years 5,000,000 boys and girls have been members and have received practical instruction in some line of work.

Even in his most optimistic dreams Dr. Knapp could not have visualized these results, although he, it was, who first realized the importance of women's work and influence in the betterment of rural life, and through women, the children.

There are many in Texas today who well remember the virile, energetic old man of 70 who instigated the first demonstration farms in Texas, the first cotton farmers and if there is any thing in the world to thank the boll weevil for, it is the fact that it has absolutely turned the first farmer attention of Dr. Knapp to the rich Texas farmers.

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Reminiscences of Dr. Knapp.

The second day of the celebration will be given over to a review of the life and work of Doctor Knapp and to personal reminiscences by those who were associated with him in his early work in Texas, Louisiana and Arkansas, with perhaps a very few who had the privilege of his friendship during his first years at the Iowa Agricultural College.

Personally, I am proud of the fact that my very earliest recollections of life are connected with memories of Doctor Knapp as a man who was as humanly kind and simple as he was noble and intellectual, and who was never too tired or too busy or too important, to be kind and friendly with a child.

I was born in a little cottage near the campus of the Ames, Iowa, Agricultural College about the time that Doctor Knapp was made president of the institution, and as my father and Doctor Knapp were friends, it was my great privilege and pleasure to be often in the company of this man whom the whole nation now honors, and this early association has exerted an influence on my entire life.

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Lessons in Nature Lore.

There are no memories so potent for me, poignant as those of childhood and today my mind goes back across the years, and unearths from the storehouse of memory recollections of the days when as a child I frequently rode with my father and Doctor Knapp in the comfortable old buggy, drawn by the quiet, steady old brown horse, on many a happy jaunt out in the fields and woods which surrounded the college, and there, from the lips of this "nature's nobleman" I received my first lessons in nature lore. In the form of simply told stories of trees, flowers and the little wood folk.

I shall remember the color of his eyes, but I do remember, after more than 40 years, the kindly, humorous expression in them as he sometimes lifted me up to pat the old brown horse, or sit me on a low-hanging limb of some favorite tree, and as clearly as though it were but yesterday comes the memory of an incident that occurred when I was 5 years old.

Standing at the window one morning I watched the school children passing and observed with much interest that most of them, especially the boys, would stop at the big maple trees to pat them and press their lips to the rugged bark and "go on their way rejoicing." Apparently they were getting a great kick out of these salutations, so finally I asked my mother if I might go out and "kiss the trees" as the other children were doing.

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"Kissing" the Trees.

I remember the laughter my childish ignorance evoked, but my mother bundled me up, for there was still snow on the ground, took me out and let me "kiss" the motherly old maple trees to my heart's content, and to this day I remember the taste of that cool, sweet sap that trickled from the bark of the sugary maple.

A few days later I was taken by my father and Doctor Knapp to a sugar maple grove near the town of Ames, the sap boiling in the big black kettles, being converted into delicious syrup and blocks of solid sugar candy. My father recounted to Doctor Knapp the incident of my kissing the trees, and Doctor Knapp did not laugh. He took me in his arms and, carrying me to an enormous old maple tree near by, said, "Little boy, I want everybody in the world loved trees as I have come to love them, and then he told me a wondrous tale of how the little trees peeping out after the long, severe winter, all the scorching days of summer and hiding places when the maple sap began to run, and went around and around every maple tree they could find.

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"Never Tap."

Perhaps I remember Doctor Knapp's kindly, expressive eyes so clearly because for a long time I was constantly closely to me as he looked sleepy, and the reason was I had heard the story boys chant "Doctor Knapp never naps," meaning, of course, that he was always on the job in the school room, but in my childish mind I wondered how he got along without any sleep, yet was always alert and wide awake.

Another thing I remember is that Doctor Knapp was a lover of oh, such gentle hands, and as we walked hand in hand my father was enwiched in between my father and Doctor Knapp, the latter would reach down and take my two small hands in one of his, holding them affectionately, as he continued his conversation with my father, occasionally calling my attention to something of vital interest, a bird's nest, a fine horse or cow, a limb, a rabbit scurrying across a mossy field or the first tinge of green in the hazle copse. And thus he was with all children with whom he came in contact, which is the most sure indication of a noble character.

Others may remember his learned discourses, his practical and intellectual achievements and his enviable social position, but I remember him as one who loved nature and little children.

SOUTH AIDED BY WORK OF DR. KNAPP

Farm Demonstration Methods of Educator Developed New Phase in Public Education.

Walter Hines Page, ambassador to Great Britain during the world war, editor of the World's Work and former editor of the Atlantic Monthly, reviewed the work of Dr. Seaman A. Knapp, father of farm extension work, in a review, as quoted from B. J. Hendrick's "The Life and Letters of Walter H. Page," as follows:

"In 1906 the problem of Southern education assumed a new phase. Dr. Wallace Buttrick, the secretary of the general education board, had now decided that the fundamental problem was economic. By that time the Southern people had revised their original conception that education was a private and not a public concern; there was now a general acceptance of the doctrine that the needful and physical training of every child, white and black, was a subject that no politician who aspired to public office would dare to take a contrary view.

"Yet the economic difficulty still remained. The South was poor; whatever might be the general desire, the taxable resources were not sufficient to support such a comprehensive system of popular instruction as existed in the North and West. Any permanent improvement must therefore be based on the growing prosperity of the South's economic position. Essentially the task was to build up Southern agriculture, which for generations had been wasteful, unintelligent and consequentially unproductive.

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Practical Farmer.

"Such a far-reaching program might well appal the most energetic reformer, but Doctor Buttrick set to work. His saw little light until his attention was drawn to the quaint and philosophic gentleman—a kind of lucolle Ben Franklin—who was then obscurely working in the cotton lands of Louisiana, making warfare on the boll weevil in the way of his own. At that time Dr. Seaman A. Knapp had made no national reputation; yet he had evolved a plan for redeeming country life and making American farms more fruitful that has since worked marvelous results. There was nothing especially sensational about its details. Doctor Knapp had made the discovery in relation to farms that the utilitarians had long since made with reference to other human activities; that the only way to improve agriculture was not to talk about it, but to go and do it.

"During the preceding 50 years agricultural colleges had sprung up all over the United States—Doctor Knapp had been president of one such college; practically every Southern state had one or more; agricultural lectures covered thousands of miles annually, telling their yawning audiences how to farm. These efforts had scattered broadcast much valuable information about the subject, but the difficulty lay in inducing the farmers to apply it.

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New Method.

"Doctor Knapp had a new method. He selected a particular farmer and persuaded him to work his fields for a period according to methods which he prescribed. He told his pupil how to plow, what seed to plant, how to space his rows, what fertilizers to use, and the like. If a selected acreage yielded a profitable crop which the farmer could sell at an increased price, Doctor Knapp had sufficient faith in human nature to believe that that particular farmer would continue to operate his farm on the new method and that his neighbors, having this practical example of growing prosperity, would imitate him.

"Such was the famous 'demonstration work' of Dr. Seaman A. Knapp; this activity is now a regular branch of the department of agriculture, employing thousands of agents and spending not far from $18,000,000 a year. Its application to the South has made practically a new and rich country, and it has long since been extended to other regions. When Doctor Buttrick first met Knapp, however, there were few indications of this splendid future. He brought Doctor Knapp North and exhibited him to Page. This was precisely the kind of a man who appealed to Page's sympathies. His mind was always keenly on the lookout for the new man—the original thinker who had some practical plan for uplifting humankind and making life more worth while. And Doctor Knapp's mission was one that had filled most of his thoughts for many years; its real purpose was the enrichment of country life.

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Supported by Page.

"Page therefore took to Doctor Knapp with a mighty zest. He supported him on all occasions; he pleaded his cause with great eloquence before the general education board, whose purse strings were liberally unloosed in behalf of the Knapp work; in his writings, in speeches, in letters, in all forms of public advocacy he insisted that Doctor Knapp had found the solution of the agricultural problem. The fact is that Page regarded Knapp as one of the greatest men of the time. His feeling came out with characteristic intensity on the occasion of Doctor Knapp's funeral in Washington. The day was bleak and chill, the attendants were few besides officials of the department of agriculture. The clergyman read the service in the most perfunctory way.

"Then James Wilson, the secretary of agriculture, spoke formally of Doctor Knapp as a faithful servant of the department who always did well what he was told to do, commending his life in an altogether commonplace fashion. By that time my heart was pretty hot. No one seemed to divine that the coffin before them was not the body of a really great man, who had hit upon a fruitful idea in American agriculture—an idea that was destined to cover the nation and enrich rural life immeasurably.

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Eloquent Tribute.

Page was so moved by this lack of appreciation, so full of sorrow at the loss of one of his dearest friends that, when he rose to speak, his appraisement took on a certain indignation. Their dead associate, Page declared, would outrank the generals and the politicians who received the world's plaudits, for he had devoted his life to a really great purpose; his inspiration had been the love of his fellow-men; he was kind, his sympathy had all been expended in an effort to brighten the life of the too frequently neglected farmer. Page's address on this occasion was entirely extemporaneous; no record of it was ever made, but those who heard it will carry the memory of an eloquent tribute to the author that placed Knapp's work in its proper relation to American agriculture and gave an unforgetable picture of a patient, unselfish, achieving man whose name will loom large in the future.

This is a fine tribute to the work of Doctor Knapp. It represents the kind of service which should be brought to the attention of college men and women now preparing themselves for the various business and professional problems of life. The nation may well feel proud of its illustrious representative.

FARM GROUPS WILL CONVENE HERE TUESDAY

Sessions Lasting Three Days Expected to Draw 800 to 1000 Persons; Program Is Given.

Farm extension workers from all over the country will meet in Houston three days, beginning Tuesday, to celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of extension work in the United States. The meeting will be in conjunction with the thirtieth annual convention of the Association of Southern Agricultural Workers.

It was considered fitting to hold the silver anniversary celebration of the extension work in Houston, as it was in this city that the pioneer in extension work, Dr. Seaman A. Knapp, had his first headquarters in January, 1904.

The anniversary celebration is being sponsored by the extension services of agricultural colleges in the United States department of agriculture and the Association of Southern Agricultural Workers.

Attendance for the sessions has been estimated at 800 to 1000, including virtually all extension workers in Texas who number in excess of 200. A large delegation from A. and M. College, headed by President T. O. Walton, Director O. H. M. Wilson of the extension service and Director A. B. Conner of the Texas agricultural experiment station, will attend.

Beginning Tuesday and ending Thursday each morning of the program will be devoted to general sessions addressed by persons of national prominence. The status and relationships of the farm and the country home will be discussed by leading representatives of banks, railroads, women's clubs, the press, the church and colleges.

The opening day's program will deal largely with the present status of the work.

On the second day the program will be chiefly historical and memorial. Speakers will be those who had a share in aiding Doctor Knapp, "father of the extension work." His daughter, Mrs. A. B. Mayo of Lake Charles, La., will read a sketch of his life and there will be other tributes and appraisals.

A pioneers' banquet Wednesday will honor Doctor Knapp's family and all the former agents in different agents who helped by the foundations of the work. On the same evening the Dramatic Club of A. and M. College will present a play entitled "Dawn," written by Mrs. P. L. Thomas of College Station. This play will be preceded by a pageant of progress staged by negro farm agents of Texas.

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"Next 25 Years" Theme.

Thursday the general theme will be "The Next 25 Years."

Afternoons have been set aside for sectional meetings, including the regional meeting of the Southern extension service, the section of the Association of Southern Agricultural Workers, the bankers' or pioneers' group, the Texas agents, the negro agents and various other groups.

The finals of the celebration will be a trip to the lower Rio Grande Valley, a special train leaving on Thursday night and returning Friday night. The valley will be toured on Friday and at a banquet at Matamoros in Mexico that night visitors will fraternize with agricultural officials of the republic of Mexico.

Headquarters in Houston will be at the Rice Hotel. General sessions will be in the City Auditorium. Sectional meetings will be at the Rice.

President Walton of A. and M. College will preside at the opening session. The program follows:

"The Present Agricultural Situation," John Fields, vice president Federal Land Bank, Wichita, Kan.; "American Womanhood and Home Demonstration Work," Mrs. John D. Sherman, Estes Park, Colo., past president of the General Federation of Women's Clubs; "The Railroads' Interest in Agricultural Extension Work," L. W. Baldwin, president of the Missouri Pacific Railway, St. Louis.

For the night session, C. B. Smith, department of agriculture, Washington, D. C., will preside. The program will include: "The Contribution of the Press to Agriculture," C. A. Cobb, editor Southern Ruralist, Atlanta, Ga.; "Extension Work and the College," E. C. Brooks, president of the State College of Agriculture, Raleigh, N. C.; R. H. Martin, director of the Texas extension service, will preside at the Wednesday morning session. The program follows: "Agricultural Workers, Knowledge and Skill," Dr. Frank Thursby morning session. The program will include: "The American Farmer and Agriculture of the Future," Charles S. Brough, president of Central College, Conway, Ark.; "Rural Life Tomorrow," W. H. Hendrix, pastor of the Highland Methodist Church, Birmingham, Ala.

Business session of the Association of Agricultural Workers will be held Thursday morning, following the Armistice celebration session.

Meetings will be held by the following sections of the association: Agricultural economics, agricultural engineering, agronomy, animal husbandry, dairy, entomology, chemical, home economics and horticultural.

The Southern plant board will hold joint program with the engineering section.

Officers for 1928-29 of the Association of Southern Agricultural Workers include:

H. A. Morgan, Knoxville, Tenn., president; Wilmon Newell, Gainesville, Fla., and W. E. Hinds, Baton Rouge, La., vice presidents; J. C. Pridmore, Atlanta, Ga., secretary-treasurer.

Additional members of the executive committee include: H. W. Barre, Clemson College, S. C.; J. N. Harper, Athens, Ga., and J. C. Hicks, Mississippi A. and M. College.

Wabash Terrier Gives a Silver Tooth

Wabash, Ind., Feb. 2.—Patty, a small wire-haired terrier owned by Dr. and Mrs. Fred Bent, was the only dog in Wabash today. She has a silver tooth.

The pet whimpered for several days as a result of a toothache. So Doctor Bent, a dentist, took the dog to his office, where an examination disclosed a cavity in the pup's tooth.

The dog got the tooth with silver.

Patty acted like a human in utility by trying to enjoy the proceedings, but she has stopped her whimpering. Also Doctor Bent pointed out she is worth more now than before, as silver is valued at $1 an ounce.

Leipzig Is Building Skyscraper Hotel

Leipzig, Feb. 2.—The first "skyscraper hotel" constructed and equipped in the American manner is being erected in the ancient city of Leipzig, Germany. Built of steel and concrete, the building rises to a height of 14 stories, abruptly breaking the skyline of the city which has remained undisturbed for 1000 years.

The new hotel contains 800 rooms and 800 baths, a proportion hitherto unknown in Europe and is built to accommodate in part the army of 2200 business men from all parts of the United States which regularly attends the Leipzig Trade Fair.

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